

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 138939  
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 AID-05 EUR-12 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 /098 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CAR:FTUMMINIA:KC  
APPROVED BY ARA:SASHELTON  
ARA/CAR:AHEWITT

-----041835 020541Z /23

R 012114Z JUN 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 138939

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GY

SUBJECT: SHELTON/MANN MEMCON

REF: STATE 119942; GEORGETOWN 1490

1. SHELTON AND MANN HAD LUNCH ON MAY 25 FOR A TOUR  
D'HORISON OF DEVELOPMENTS IN GUYANA. MANN HAD INITIALLY  
REQUESTED A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPPOSED U.S. AND SOME  
OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRY EFFORTS TO OBSTRUCT IMF/GUYANESE  
NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE OF CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS  
SITUATION.

SHELTON VIGOROUSLY DENIED ANY SUCH U.S. ACTIONS. MANN  
SUBSEQUENTLY ADMITTED THAT HE HAD ALREADY LEARNED (FROM  
BURNHAM) THAT THESE RUMORS WERE FALSE. MANN INQUIRED  
AS TO THE RESULTS OF CARIBBEAN DONORS MEETING IN PARIS.  
SHELTON BRIEFED HIM ON MEETING AND DESCRIBED STATUS OF  
CARIBBEAN GROUP.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 138939

2. SHELTON DESCRIBED CONCERN IN U.S. OVER POSSIBILITY  
OF DENIAL OF POLITICAL RIGHTS THROUGH EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO  
AMEND CONSTITUTION. MANN EMPHASIZED THAT EFFORTS TO  
AMEND CONSTITUTION WERE TAKING PLACE WHOLLY WITHIN A

LEGAL FRAMEWORK, THAT CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO BE SET UP

FOR WRITING A NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD HOLD HEARINGS OR OPEN MEETINGS TO ALLOW ALL INTERESTED PARTIES AND GROUPS TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS, AND THAT NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD NOT SET UP A 'PRESIDENT FOR LIFE' OR 'INSTITUTIONALIZE' THE PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY.

IN FACT, NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD NOT DIFFER MARKEDLY FROM PRESENT ONE. GOVERNMENT'S MANDATE, I.E., THE FRAME OF TIME IN WHICH IT COULD GOVERN WITHOUT HOLDING ELECTIONS, MIGHT WELL BE THE SAME AS PRESENTLY. ONLY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ARE LIKELY TO BE GUARANTEES OF PEOPLES RIGHT TO WORK AND LEISURE AND A PROHIBITION ON PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF MEANS OF PRODUCTION. MANN EMPHASIZED THIS REFERRED ONLY TO LAND HOLDINGS. MANN SAID CONFIDENTIALLY THAT REASON PRIME MINISTER WAS GOING THROUGH THIS 'PAINFUL' PROCEDURE OF AMENDING CONSTITUTION WAS OBVIOUSLY BECAUSE IT WOULD FORESTALL HOLDING OF ELECTIONS. MANN ENVISIONED THAT WRITING OF A NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD TAKE ROUGHLY TWO YEARS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT ELECTIONS WOULD CERTAINLY TAKE PLACE 12-18 MONTHS AFTERWARDS.

3. MANN IS STILL TRYING TO TALK BURNHAM INTO A PRIVATE VISIT DURING JUNE IN ORDER TO DISCUSS NEW CONSTITUTION WITH GUYANESE EXPATRIATES. BURNHAM CONTINUES TO BE RELUCTANT TO VISIT U.S. WITHOUT A WHITE HOUSE VISIT. MANN DESCRIBED THE CHANCES OF BURNHAM'S VISIT AS 70-30 AGAINST. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 138939

MANN REMINDED SHELTON THAT STATE DEPARTMENT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE PRESSING FOR A BURNHAM/CARTER MEETING FOR NEXT YEAR. MANN WAS HIGHLY INTERESTED IN HAVING FOREIGN MINISTER JACKSON MEET WITH SECRETARY VANCE IN NEAR FUTURE IF VANCE COULD MAKE A COMMITMENT FOR A BURNHAM/CARTER MEETING IN PRINCIPLE DURING 1979. THAT COMMITMENT WOULD THEN BE MADE PUBLIC IN GUYANA. SHELTON AGREED TO LOOK INTO MATTER BUT EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT FEASIBILITY OF SETTING UP A MEETING THIS FAR IN ADVANCE.

4. ON INSTRUCTIONS, MANN THANKED THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR ITS HELP DURING THE RECENT POWER CRISIS. HE SAID HE HAD REMINDED PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM THAT "HIS FRIENDS", THE CUBANS AND SOVIETS, HAD PROVIDED NO SUCH ASSISTANCE.

5. WHEN ASKED HOW HE SAW PRIME MINISTER'S RECENT TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER COUNTRIES, MANN BRUSHED THE TRIP OFF AS HAVING "NO HARD ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE." HE SAID BRITISH HAD AGREED TO LOOK INTO POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA BUT AS YET THERE HAD BEEN NO FOLLOW UP.

6. DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN FOLLOWING WITH GROWING CONCERN DEVELOPMENTS IN GUYANA IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND PLANNED REFERENDUM. MEETING BETWEEN SHELTON AND MANN WAS MEANT AS LOW KEY APPROACH TO GOG TO INDICATE SUCH CONCERN. MANN'S RATHER DISINGENUOUS DOWN PLAYING OF NATURE OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IS NOT VERY CONVINCING. PROPOSED CHANGES, IF ACCURATE, WOULD SEEM TO PLACE NEW GUYANESE CONSTITUTION VERY MUCH IN LINE WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION, BURNHAM'S OWN STATEMENT THAT GUYANA WILL TURN TO A PRESIDENTIAL TYPE OF GOVERNMENT WOULD AT LEAST INDICATE THAT HE IS THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE FOR SUCH A POSITION. WHILE HE MAY NOT BE LIKELY TO PROCLAIM HIMSELF PRESIDENT FOR LIFE HE IS CERTAINLY LIKELY TO  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 138939

BE PRESIDENT FOR A LONG TIME.

7. WITH REFERENCE TO THE LETTER TO BURNHAM FROM PRESIDENT CARTER WE HAVE CONVEYED AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT AND WELL-FOUNDED CONCERNS TO NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND HAVE EXPRESSED OUR AGREEMENT THAT LETTER SHOULD NOT BE DELIVERED. UNTIL A DECISION IS REACHED YOU SHOULD HOLD THE LETTER IN ABEYANCE.

8. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS IN GUYANA, IF AND WHEN REFERENDUM IS HELD AND WON BY PNC. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING A CONTINGENCY PAPER AND EMBASSY INPUTS WOULD BE WELCOME.

9. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF AGAIN REVIEWING THE REQUEST OF TEAR GAS (SEE REFTEL STATE 119942). THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE AMOUNT REQUESTED IS UNUSUALLY LARGE. IN ADDITION, THIS IS FIRST REQUEST IN THE LAST TWO YEARS TO PURCHASE THIS MATERIAL FROM U.S. SOURCES. DEPARTMENT NOTES THAT A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE 'MIRROR' SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED TEAR GAS USED IN INCIDENT DESCRIBED IN REFTEL GEORGETOWN I490 AS BEING BRITISH MADE. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HAD THE TEAR GAS BEEN U.S. MADE, THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN CLEARLY POINTED OUT. THESE FACTS WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE BRITISH SOURCES MAY BE DRYING OUT AND THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT IS NOW TURNING TO THE U.S. FOR NEW SUPPLIES. WE WILL INFORM THE EMBASSY BEFORE MAKING A FINAL DECISION ON THE EXPORT LICENSE. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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